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THE WORK OF GIOVANNI MARDERSTEIG

by JOHN DREYFUS

COPPA'S REVISITED, *by* ALBERT SHUMATE, M.D.

BOOKS AND THE SENSES *by* CLIFFORD BURKE

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The Book Club of California Quarterly News-Letter

Volume xxxvii Number two



THE WORK OF GIOVANNI MARDERSTEIG

*by John Dreyfus**

HOW very odd that Mardersteig's work is so little known. This great scholar-printer and type-designer is approaching the end of his eightieth year. He has been showered with honours—medals from the Bodoni Museum in Parma, from his own city of Verona, from Leipzig and from the American Institute of Graphic Arts. In the land of his birth, during the celebrations which marked the five hundredth anniversary of Gutenberg's death, the City of Mainz awarded him the Gutenberg Prize. He has been admitted to the very distinguished order of Grand' Ufficiale in his adopted country by the Italian Government and he is greatly loved by a circle of friends which extends throughout the world. Yet if you look in the great libraries of the United States for books printed by him, you will find only two in the Clark Memorial Library, ten in the Huntington Library, twenty-nine in the Newberry Library, and forty in the New York Public Library. (Let me add that there are only fifteen in the British Museum, and five in the Bibliothèque Nationale

*Typographical advisor to Cambridge University Press, The Monotype Corporation, and a director of the Curwen Press, to mention only a few of his activities.

—so England and France have been as neglectful of his talents as the great libraries in this country.)

As I have known Mardersteig for about fifteen years and respect him more than any other living European printer, I am therefore very happy to share with you some of my knowledge of him. First let me briefly sketch in the more important facts about his many activities.

The few who know of Mardersteig connect his name with that of his hand press, the *Officina Bodoni*, in Verona. But it would be quite wrong to infer that he has retreated from the twentieth century world to print by hand with Bodoni's types. Today, only a small part of his time is devoted to the hand press, and it is no longer customary for him to use Bodoni's types. In the past forty years he has designed several fine text types and display faces for his own use, and his most recent type, *Dante*, has enriched the resources of printers throughout the world when it was made available for mechanical composition.

In addition to the hand press, he now directs a compact and modern printing house equipped with carefully chosen machinery for composing and printing. From this plant, the *Stamperia Valdònega*, he produces work which bears comparison with the standard of excellence established at his *Officina Bodoni*.

Printing, whether it be by hand or by machine, does not monopolize his entire working life. Since his youth he has been passionately interested in literature, and he has consistently followed his own predilections in publishing texts which interest him or in reproducing work by artists he admires. He has himself written scholarly books and monographs which owe much of their quality to his remarkably acute perception of things seen as well as read. He is widely travelled, and is able to welcome a constant stream of visitors in fluent Italian, German, French and English. His knowledge of the art and literature of ancient Greece and Rome is helped by a sound knowledge of Latin and classical Greek. But our concern is mainly with his artistic abilities.

If artistic temperament is a matter of genes, Mardersteig's might be traced back to both his grandfathers—one a professional painter and the other a sculptor named Gustav Blaser, whose bust of Lincoln is to be found in Washington. Mardersteig's father, a successful lawyer, gave his son a training deliberately calculated to develop his manual and intellectual capacities. Young Mardersteig and his three brothers were brought up in Weimar, where they were taught as children to use their hands by spending weekends on manual work, with carpenters, printers or other skilled workmen. His father was personally interested in every kind of manual skill and encouraged his sons to acquire it; but he did not neglect their intellectual development. A stream of distinguished visitors to his home helped excite the children in the delights of the mind. Among these visitors was Count Harry Kessler, patron of the arts, man of letters, diplomat, publisher, and also the proprietor of a private press.

During his childhood in Weimar, Mardersteig found a well-stocked bookshop where he was free to browse for as long as he liked. An enduring passion for books was formed during those hours of browsing, and his mind was rapidly stocked with a great deal of knowledge, which later stood him in good stead.

In choosing a subject to study at university, he expressed a preference for the history of art, but his father insisted that he should read law, so that he would have some professional qualification and some means of earning his livelihood. He began to study at the University of Bonn, but soon moved to Vienna. There, at a safe distance from his father, he was in fact able to devote a good deal of his time to the history of art. Later he completed his studies in Kiel and Jena.

Mardersteig suffered from tubercular trouble and was unfit for military service. He spent the early years of the war gaining experience in legal administration in Germany, but poor health obliged him to go to Switzerland in 1916. His health gradually improved and for a time he taught at a school in Zuoz. But as he was unable to speak

continuously for any length of time, he soon had to abandon teaching.

At the end of the war he had to face the problem of choosing his career. He knew of Kurt Wolff, a gifted publisher with an impressive list; Mardersteig wrote him a memorandum with detailed proposals for extending it to cover the field of art. He suggested several new series, and gave titles for books which should be included, with names of people competent to write them. He also made a proposal for launching a new review of art, later called *Genius*. After a lengthy discussion with Wolff, the publisher invited him to Leipzig and to carry out his plans there.

The first of six bi-annual volumes of *Genius* came out in 1919. It was hard to give unity to these large volumes with so many separately printed woodcuts, lithographs, coloured plates and text. This experience taught him how important it was for one man to control printing, binding and publishing.

The generally poor quality of available printing led Mardersteig to consider setting up a press of his own. He was dissatisfied with the books produced under his direction by others, and he saw how badly they compared with the attractive work produced by English and German private presses.

Count Kessler had proved at the Cranach Press in Weimar that the high standards of the English Private Press Movement could be successfully transplanted: no book made a greater typographic impact on Mardersteig than an edition of Goethe's novels which Kessler published in his series of German classics. Mardersteig was also familiar with the work of other private presses, but did not admire all their books. For a time he worked at the *Officina Serpentis*, but he wasn't wholly in sympathy with the style of that house, nor its methods; he had his own ideas about what he wanted to print and how to print. He was impatient to set up his own private press.

Having decided to do so, one of his first problems was to decide what type to use. He could not afford to start with a new type, so he had to find a type which was already in existence, but not in common

use. For many years he had admired the types of Bodoni, from whose printing house in Parma a magnificent series of books had appeared, culminating in the posthumously published *Manuale Tipografico* issued by his widow in 1818. One of Bodoni's books had caught Mardersteig's eye during his first visit to Italy in 1912. As time went on he acquired many more of his books, and became thoroughly familiar with his typography.

His interest in Bodoni was shared by a friend in Rome, a young man who suffered from lung trouble caused by a wartime gas attack. Because of their health, they decided jointly to set up a printing press in Switzerland. Through his friend's father, a sculptor in Rome, permission was obtained from the authorities for type to be cast for their use from Bodoni's original matrices, which were still preserved in Parma. In 1922 Mardersteig set up the press in Montagnola near Lugano, but unfortunately his friend did not respond to treatment and was never able to join him.

From Bodoni's enormous range of types, Mardersteig chose only a small number of fonts. With them he produced some handsome volumes in a style unlike Bodoni's books. What was quite astonishing was that right from the start, books produced by the Officina Bodoni were of impeccable quality—there were no preliminary falterings.

At first he himself composed the type and also printed it with his own hands. Later he engaged a compositor and employed a girl to help by damping the paper, hanging, pressing and folding the printed sheets, and then sewing the finished books. He had some experience of bookbinding, but soon he had the good fortune to be joined by an experienced Greek binder named Demeter, a fine craftsman who had previously worked with Cobden-Sanderson at the Doves Press, and also with Gruel in Paris. Demeter carried out some magnificent binding designs at Montagnola.

The Jansenist severity of Bodoni's original style was tempered by decoration on Mardersteig's bindings, and in part by the deliberate

use of Bodoni's more decorative types. None the less it soon became clear that there were limits to the amount of variety which could be introduced into the typography of the press if the range of text types was to be confined to the original Bodoni trio. A further disadvantage was that these types were all, with the exception of the italic, unsuited for use with modern book illustrations, and it had been Mardersteig's intention from the start to produce fine illustrated books as well as finely printed, carefully edited texts.

The first extension to the range of types followed a visit to Montagnola by Stanley Morison. A few years after the press had been established, Morison came at Christmas time and stayed for a week. During a series of lively discussions he spoke of an American friend, Frederic Warde, who had designed an Arrighi type based on a letter in a sixteenth-century writing book by Lodovico Vincentino. Mardersteig was familiar with the original, and when Warde later explained to him in Montagnola that he would like his book to be printed there on the hand press, the proposal was readily accepted. Both Mardersteig and Warde enjoyed their collaboration so much that they promptly set to work on an edition of the *Crito* for which Warde made a few modifications to his Arrighi type. Both books were published in 1926.

The year 1926 was marked by two other events which were to have a lasting effect on the Officina Bodoni. In that year Mardersteig was first introduced to a French punch-cutter, Charles Malin, who was then at work on the punches for Eric Gill's Perpetua type. (Malin later cut punches for all the types designed by Mardersteig for hand composition, and the two men became close friends.) The other event in the year 1926 entirely changed the activity and location of the Officina Bodoni.

A National Institute was established in Italy in 1926 to produce a complete edition of the works of Gabriele D'Annunzio. To discover which printer deserved the honour of carrying out this task, a competition was arranged and a dozen printers were invited to take part.

Mardersteig's name was included by an Italian publisher and printer Arnoldo Mondadori. The specimens submitted by Mardersteig were judged to be best, but when he was invited to print the series of more than forty volumes, it was discreetly suggested to him that he might agree to set up his printing press on Italian soil.

The idea of moving to Italy had already been in his mind for several months. Now he had decided to settle in Verona, conveniently close to D'Annunzio's home on Lake Garda, and a centre in which he was able to find new quarters and additional staff in 1927. Existing staff were transferred from Montagnola, but as the entire D'Annunzio edition was to be composed by hand, extra compositors were engaged, and in due course a second hand press and a bindery were set up. To provide him with the quarters he required, Mondadori covered in a large courtyard inside his own printing plant. Mardersteig enjoyed complete autonomy over this press within a press, and at the same time was given great assistance with routine problems.

After five years the bulk of the work was completed, although the final volumes of the index did not appear until 1936, by which time 200 copies had been printed on the hand presses on Japanese vellum and a further nine copies on real vellum; in addition 2000 copies had been printed by machine. During this mammoth printing operation, Mardersteig drove back and forth between Verona and D'Annunzio's residence. On his first visit he was greeted by a thirteen-gun-salute from the flamboyant poet, who loved to stride the bridge of his landlocked battleship. But a firm friendship grew between printer and poet.

Work on the D'Annunzio editions did not bring all other work to a halt. Facsimiles of two more writing books were printed, and in 1929 there appeared a *catalogue raisonné* of the books published by the Officina Bodoni in its first six years, with an introduction by the printer. More types were added to the typographical resources of the press, first Janson from the Stempel Foundry and later Monotype Poliphilus and Blado. An entirely new font cut by Malin became available in 1929, although it was not used publicly till ten years

later. The type was inspired by a magnificent roman cut by Francesco Griffo, and the new version of it was given his name.

Mardersteig designed a second new roman type while recovering from a bout of meningitis in 1931. He named it Zeno, after the patron saint of Verona.

Type-designing activities did something to fill the gap caused by completion of the D'Annunzio editions, but Mardersteig later decided that a completely new experience in new surroundings would do him good. He therefore accepted an invitation to work for a short time in Glasgow at the Collins Cleartype Press, and agreed to work there for six months.

One of his first questions in Glasgow was "Where is your clear type?" The staff of Collins explained to him that no such type existed, although all their types were in fact clear. This did not satisfy Mardersteig who suggested that if they called themselves a Cleartype Press, they ought to have a type which would distinguish them from other printers. A type of Scottish origin seemed to be indicated and his choice finally fell upon a type used in Glasgow by Foulis in the eighteenth century. He redrew this type and handed over his drawings to the Monotype Corporation who made the type for the exclusive use of Collins. After the last war, Collins agreed to allow the type to be sold to other printers.

In addition to making this contribution to Collins' typography, Mardersteig was able to improve the standard of their presswork. Once when a pressman declared that it was impossible to produce better work with his old machine, Mardersteig gently suggested that he go off to the canteen for a few minutes; by the time he returned, Mardersteig had rolled up his sleeves, and had so adjusted the make-ready that he was able to show the pressman that the required quality could be obtained, despite the age of the machine on which he was working.

Mardersteig had gone to Glasgow for six months, but he stayed for a whole year. It reinforced his Anglophile tastes. But by now he had

put down his roots in Verona. Within a month of his first arrival in that city in 1927, he had looked over every suitable building up in the hills on the outskirts of Verona. His choice fell on a house magnificently sited off the Via Marsala which runs northwards out of the city. The son of the original owner occupied part of it for several years, but eventually the entire building became available and in June 1937 the opportunity was taken to transfer the hand press from Mondadori's plant to its present location in Mardersteig's house.

The period from 1936 to 1939 was marked by the production of more books with illustrations by contemporary artists, and also by the introduction of a wider variety of types. During these years he used his Zeno and Griffio types for the first time, and also acquired Monotype Garamond, Baskerville, Bembo, Centaur and Imprint.

Life in Italy during the 2nd World War seems to have had no visible effect on Mardersteig's typographical development, but inevitably it affected his state of mind. Yet he managed to show both the gentleness and firmness of his spirit by choosing to publish one particular book in the autumn of 1944, after the allied landings in France. Its title was *Candide*, and he also printed the sub-title which Voltaire originally gave it: "or, optimism".

When peace came, Mardersteig took stock of the many changes then starting to affect the structure of printing and publishing in Europe. He was forced to conclude that a hand press had become decidedly anachronistic. So he made up his mind to put his knowledge of printing to better use by starting a second department in which machinery would be used for typesetting and printing. He even intended to abandon the hand press and to concentrate entirely on his new department.

Encouragement to go ahead with his scheme came from a group of industrialists who approached him in 1948 with a request that he should print a number of finely printed editions to heighten respect for Italian culture in foreign countries. He was asked to draw up a plan to show how this might be achieved. A few months later this

group withdrew from the scheme; he was then unexpectedly left to carry out a plan which was not entirely his own. Fortunately he had sufficient capital at his disposal to build up a small printing establishment further along the Via Marsala; it was opened in 1949 and was named the *Stamperia Valdonega*, after the valley along which the road runs.

The new plant attracted new customers, notably the managing director of a bank, with whose encouragement work began on a compendious series of Italian Classics—a must successful series which has brought a constant flow of work to the Stamperia Valdonega.

Although it had been Mardersteig's intention to abandon the hand press, the Officina Bodoni continued in operation. There were still some patrons in Italy, the United States and the British Isles who would accept nothing less than the product of the hand press. He therefore decided to keep up the Officina Bodoni as an active printing house in addition to his new printing plant up the road. It was not a hard decision, for he still wanted to produce more illustrated books, and he again felt an urge to make some new types for hand composition.

He renewed contact with Charles Malin and sent him drawings for two new types. Malin was able to complete the punches for both these designs before his death in 1956.

Between 1954 and 1965, major exhibitions of Mardersteig's printing were shown in Antwerp, Berne, Brussels, Florence, The Hague, Hamburg, London, Lugano, Milan, Munich, Venice and Verona. Among the books shown in the more recent of these exhibitions was an edition of Felice Feliciano's *Alphabetum Romanum* printed at the Officina Bodoni in 1960. This book is remarkable because it was the outcome of prolonged research by Mardersteig who personally prepared the facsimile reproduction, edited the text from the original manuscript, wrote a lengthy introduction which incorporated the fruits of his research, planned the typography of the book, and then had it composed in types of his own design and printed on his own hand press.

Mardersteig clearly understands both the advantages of printing on a hand press and the potentialities of machines. In 1929 he wrote "... only he who has actually printed a book on a hand press and has thus trained his eye in the slow course of preparation, choosing the right tone of ink and printing, is able to appreciate that a hand press is just like the pencil of a draughtsman whose subtlety no machine can ever attain. At the same time it is obvious that there are of course bad craftsmen, and machines under the direction of masterly mechanics."

The mechanics at the Stamperia Valdonega have the advantage of being subject to the controlling eye of a man who had formed his own standards with a hand press, and who will not lower them. The staff at the Officina Bodoni work for a master-printer who can still perform for himself any of the operations he requires of them. By applying the knowledge he gained at the Officina Bodoni to the benefit of the mechanically equipped establishment at the Stamperia Valdonega, Mardersteig has vindicated his faith in the hand press.

He continues to make books of great beauty, and still writes books of deep and lucid scholarship (his latest came out only a few months ago). Continuity of his work is assured by his son Martino who now works with him at the Stamperia Valdonega. His son's arrival there was soon followed by the installation of a new plant to print by 300-line offset.

Methods may change but attitudes to work remain the same. When Giovanni Mardersteig accepted the Gutenberg Prize in 1968, he gave this order of priorities for that work of a designer-printer: "First, service to the author, by finding the form best suited to his theme. Second, service to the reader, by making the reading as easy and pleasant as possible. Third, creating an attractive overall appearance without interposing too much self-will."

Mardersteig, who celebrated his eightieth birthday in January, 1972, is still full of plans for new books. Long may he continue his magnificent work.

COPPA'S REVISITED

by Albert Shumate, M.D.

IT is almost twenty years since The Book Club of California published the *Coppa Murals* written most interestingly by Warren Unna and exquisitely printed by Adrian Wilson. In the slim volume, Unna relates "A Pageant of Bohemian Life in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century." Recently I read another Coppa remembrance in the August 24, 1907, issue of the San Francisco weekly, *Western World*. The article, by Mary Edith Griswold, is entitled "A Corner of Bohemia" and describes Coppa's as "the muse for San Francisco's poetic children."

Miss Griswold, the "Maisie" of the Coppa murals, was an author and newspaperwoman. Shortly after the Earthquake she married Col. Edwin Emerson in the Russian Hill home of Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson. Emerson was a former Roosevelt Rough Rider and, like his wife, an author and newspaperman.

Miss Griswold's article in the *Western World* contains two poems. While not of prize-winning caliber, they do "perpetuate in immortal verse" the colorful restaurant. The first recalls Coppa's food, and the author states the poem had nearly a hundred stanzas, each stanza ending with a call for "more wine." The second describes the memorable last dinner of Coppa's in the Montgomery Block shortly after the disaster of 1906. The great fire was still smouldering, the illumination was candle light, and soldiers still patrolled the streets when Lioniel Josephare, one of the Bohemians, gathered with friends to make merry and sing his song.

A COPPA DINNER

*First you take an appetizer,
Vermouth Cora is its name,
Here's your health,—salute—salute!—
Now another of the same!*

*Next a different appetizer,
Antipasto in a dish:
Celery, radish, salt salami,
Anchovies or other fish.*

*Then a glass of dry Moscato,
"Long live Italy"—"You bet."
Coppa, bring a second bottle,
Dinner isn't ready yet.*

*Hah! here comes the good minestra
Consommé with crusts of bread
With it drink Vino da pasto—
Otherwise Old Dago Red.*

*Fish and salad, then some entrée
In between more dago red;
Now bring on the Ravioli,
With a loaf of red hot bread.*

*What? You know not Ravioli,
And you wonder how it's done?
Listen then to Coppa's recipe,
Note the ingredients, one by one:*

*Into paste wrap biátole, spinach,
Little onions chopped up fine,
Sweetbread, chicken, eggs, and sausage,
Boil in broth—and drink more wine!*

*What's the next?—Spaggett', or salad?
 Maccaroni creamed for mine—
 Tagliarini with risotto
 Capoletti—and more wine.*

(POEM #2, UNTITLED)

*Adieu to the earthquake, farewell to the flames—
 The twelve of us wassailed in looted sauterne.
 Our hearts mid the ruins still played the old games;
 For the business of hearts is to ruin and burn.*

*'Twas at Coppa's, where oft we had flung the confetti;
 (We didn't do that—I aver the thing solely
 To make the line rhyme with his wriggling spaghetti—
 And also, in passing, his famed ravioli.)*

*Around us, Destruction had painted in black
 The bricks and beams of the tumbledown city.
 Night gave to the scene an impressionist smack:
 We pitied the smash-up, and danced in our pity.
 Why not? In eternity beauty is tinder.
 There are graves all around us, wherever we dance.
 The city had fallen wide, cinder on cinder;
 Like ghosts we returned there and laughed in a trance.
 Gone where the subtle, risotto-fed waiters;
 Sleek, slow-eyed, cash-registering Felix was gone.
 'Twas a donation feast eaten by the donators;
 On one table only our candles, three, shone.*

*But around in the shadow a phantasmagoria
 Of memories dined with us, nodded and gleamed.
 Dear unknown friends and many a glory a
 Man would give half of his soul to've redeemed.*

*In fancy's far colors they spectrally sat—
O lavenders, purples, pale grays and faint yellows!—
The women asmile with Bohemian chat:
The maidens light-laughing at devilish fellows.*

*A trick of the brain! ('Tis easy for genius,
Though our food had been recently quite unsublime—
A diet corned-beefy, mixed-pickly, sardineous,
—No matter); the vision is gone for the time.*

*Thus hedged in with flame-eaten alleys and castles,
Full snugly at Coppà's we mumble and laugh.
The camp-fires, the sentries, the night-bugling vassals,
Keep guard on the streets: to them let us quaff.*

*So here's to the twelve of us! Here's to the best,
And the prettiest, merriest, bravest in brawl,
Gladdest, loveliest, brainiest, quickest in jest,
Wisest, staunchest and finest and greatest of all.*

BOOKS AND THE SENSES

*by Clifford Burke**

Many writers on the design and printing of books have suggested the analogy of book making as an architectural craft, rightly sensing that the disposition of solid areas (type) and space is similar in the two arts. I however, prefer to think of a book as a sensorium, an object that appeals simultaneously to the many senses in subtle and intimate ways, as the monumental nature of architecture does not appeal. For you do not participate in a building the way you do in a book: you

*Proprietor of the Cranium Press, San Francisco.

are either in the building or out of it, the senses appealed to are visual and kinetic, and the sense I call spatial, the sense of the position of a thing in relation to the things around it, and to the viewer. (Imagine, for example, the sense involved in looking out from the top floor of the Bank of America building compared to the sense of seeing that building from the Bay Bridge.) A book involves these senses, but it also commands subtler attitudes, a blending of senses that makes a book the complex and wondrous thing it is.

One of the less obvious senses put to work by the reader of a book is the sense of weight. Most of us have at some time noticed that a certain book seems much too light for its size and thickness (caused by the publisher's attempt to make the book appear longer than it really is). And we all have had the problem of trying to read in bed a book so heavy it keeps falling over onto our chests. I don't know that this is any different from the kinetics of a book; how the book opens and the pages turn. One nasty habit the paperback book makers have is the construction of books in which the grain of the paper runs counter to the direction of the spine. This combined with a glued binding makes a book so stiff it will snap shut on your thumbs.

Another factor in the heft and feel of a book is texture, the sense of touch. I always like to take the dust jacket off a new book so I can feel the cloth's texture and the thickness of the boards. Oftentimes I put the dust jacket right back on again, preferring the feel of printed paper to the slick, starched greasiness of cheap cloth, or the unnecessary fragility of boards too thin, the lumpishness of boards too thick.

Texture is noticed most in the paper. Its bulk and surface are felt at each turn of the page. (For example, we are all so familiar with newsprint and its bookmaking equivalent that, while it's not especially attractive, we don't find it a nuisance. Despite its fragility and extremely short life, it's comfortable.) I mentioned books that weigh less than they appear to weigh. Those books use a "high bulk" paper, which apparently is not pressed as much as ordinary papers, so it is

thicker than ordinary without being heavier. Turning those pages is an adventure in surrealism.

In good book making the weight of the paper is planned to fit the size of the book so that the pages turn easily and still feel sturdy enough. A folio volume needs a much heavier paper than an octavo. Reading a book printed on handmade paper will show you at once what a pleasure to the senses beautiful paper can be. There is a crackle, a body, to the pages as they turn, and a surface that is somehow obviously the result of the making, rather than an effect added by a machine. Good machine papers approach those qualities.

Books smell, too. I can never resist sticking my nose in a new book to smell that wonderful blend of ink, paper, glue, and cloth. Some publishers' books have such characteristic odors you can almost tell whose they are without looking.

One of the most disappointing results of technology in book making is the disappearance of the impression created by punching type into paper in letterpress printing. There are those who still print this way, and the interest in the fine letterpress book is enjoying a renaissance. But the great bulk of book printing is now done either from rubber plates (as are pulp paperbacks), which leave no impression (they're like an elaborate rubber stamp) or by photo-offset, which, since it prints from a flat photographic surface, merely deposits, and in some cases smears the ink on top of the sheet. Good letterpress printing creates a splendid three dimensional effect which you can sometimes actually feel, but more often see as a precise clarity of definition of each letter, a brilliance of color: *black* type, not apologetic washed-out indecisive, grey type. And this brings us to the visual character of books, and back to the architectural analogy. For it is primarily as readers and viewers that we know our books, not as feelers and sniffers.

To extend for a moment the analogy, look at margins. Imagine being on the fortieth floor in a room with no walls. You need the same sense of containment in a book to keep from feeling as if no one cares if you

fall away or not. Margins provide a separation from the room surrounding you, and you keep inside the book. Again, the sense of spatial relations. We all own some "coffee table books," those huge colorful picture books intended to be left lying around. Try standing one of them up next to the rest of your books and you will understand why the Bank of America building is such a ridiculous failure.

Finally, reading. Some books will just wear you out. Many people, thinking they don't understand a certain book because they keep having to go back to make sense of the sentences, would find the text perfectly lucid if it had more space between the lines. It's the book itself that makes them double back. Sometimes the type is repulsive. I have been reading from a set of Dickens printed in the 1870's, the dark ages of printing, and the type in those books is so ill spaced and scrawny and crabbed I feel like old Silas Wegg himself trying to puzzle through.

There is a sense of pace to a book, to which thickness of paper and size of type contribute as much as the text itself. In good book making the pace and tone of the author are caught and reflected by all the elements in the book: you don't actually *see* fine book making. It is, as they say, invisible. But you notice it, in the pleasure you find in holding, sniffing, using, that marvellous little sensorium that puts another person's thoughts into your head.

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of The Book Club of California will be held at the Club rooms, 545 Sutter Street, San Francisco, on Tuesday, March 21, at 11:30 A.M.

Secretary

GALLIMAUFRY

The exhibition program of The Club continues to be active and members are urged to visit the Club rooms to visit and view. The Club is open daily Monday through Fridays. (Monday hours 11:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.; Tuesday through Friday 2:00 to 5:00 P.M.).

During the past year beginning in February, we were host to the Rounce and Coffin Clubs 1971 Western Books Exhibition in which two books issued by The Club in 1970 won awards, *Printing as a Performing Art* by Ruth Teiser and Catherine Harroun, (printed by Arlen Philpott), and *Journal of a Journey Across the Plains* by James Berry Brown, (printed by Jack Werner Stauffacher at his Greenwood Press.).

In March through May the work of Frederic W. Goudy was honored. This exhibition was further enriched by memorabilia lent by his San Francisco friends. Another outstanding exhibition was the selective exhibition of the typographical work of Stanley Morison held during September, continuing the exhibits program featuring famous typographers and printers.

Three Open House events and special exhibitions were held for the three books offered by The Club in 1971: Spring—*Ah-Wah-Ne Days*, by Helen Hunt Jackson (Mallette Dean); Fall—*California, Land of Gold*, by J. Müller, (Lawton and Alfred Kennedy); and Winter—*Dr. Johnson and Noah Webster, Two Men and their Dictionaries* by David Littlejohn (Grabhorn-Hoyem).

Also in September The Club was co-sponsor of a remarkably interesting exhibition held at the Main Branch of the San Francisco Public Library on Gertrude Stein and her fellow expatriates in Paris,

shown concurrently with the painting exhibition held at the San Francisco Museum of Art.

In January of this year we were fortunate to show a comprehensive exhibit of works from the Eragny Press—and then to complete the cycle back to the Rounce & Coffin Club's 1972 Western Books Exhibition currently on view.

ELECTED TO MEMBERSHIP

The following have been elected since the publication of the Fall News-Letter:

<i>Member</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>
Richard William Anderson	Mountain View	Carroll T. Harris
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Blanc	San Francisco	Mrs. R. F. Ferguson
Clifford Burke	San Francisco	Florian Shasky
John D. Coll	San Francisco	David Belch
John T. Halligan	Sacramento	Michael Harrison
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Marston	San Francisco	Robert L. Goldman
Philip L. Metzger	Prairie Village, Ks.	Jacob Zeitlin
Richard W. Mills	Alameda	John W. Borden
Everett V. O'Rourke	Sacramento	Mrs. Robert D. Leigh
Karl V. Steinbrugge	El Cerrito	David Magee
Dr. Robert Voight	San Francisco	John Chanalís
McKissick Memorial Library, University of South Carolina	Columbia, S.C.	Robert E. Bell

The two classifications of membership above Regular Membership are Patron Memberships, \$100 a year, and Sustaining Memberships, \$35 a year. The following entered the Club as Patron members:

Mrs. J. C. Plews	Honolulu, Hawaii
Donald E. Knox	San Marino

The following have changed from Regular to Sustaining Membership:

Norman Philbrick	Los Altos Hills
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BOOK REVIEWS

James D. Hart. *The Scholar and the Book Collector*. Mills College Library, Oakland, California, 94613. 30 pp. \$5.00

Many who heard this delightful talk by Dr. Hart, Director of the Bancroft Library, University of California, will be pleased to learn that it is now available in printed form. The lecture was originally given at Mills College to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Albert M. Bender Room in the Library. The book is handsomely printed by the Grabhorn-Hoyem Press. Copies may be obtained by writing to the Mills College Library. It would be advisable to order promptly as the edition is quite limited and the price modest.

D.M.



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